

**Diocese of Phoenix
Catholic Schools Office
Catechist Certification Requirements for Catholic School Educators**

This document will provide essential information regarding the specific requirements for Catechist Certification for Catholic school educators within the Diocese of Phoenix.

The Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Schools Office requires all educators working in a Catholic school, full or part-time, to obtain the Diocese of Phoenix Catechist Certification within three years after initial employment. It is also required that those holding the Catechist Certification continue with ongoing formation and renew their certification every three years thereafter. It is the responsibility of the educator to keep track of the three year timeframe and meet all necessary deadlines.

Definition of Educator:

- Principal, Assistant Principal and Dean
- Preschool Director
- Classroom Teacher (including all grade levels - PS through 12th, subjects, and specials)
- Counselor and Social Worker
- Librarian
- Other (those educators who work directly with students and/or faculty in a teaching capacity such as instructional content specialists, e.g., reading or math specialist, instructional coaches, interventionists, etc.)

Initial Catechist Certification:

All educators working in a Catholic School in the Diocese of Phoenix must obtain the Catechist Certification within three years of initial hire. If an educator moves from one school within the diocese to another, the three year requirement remains based on the initial employment to the diocese and not to each individual school. If an employed educator does not obtain initial Catechist Certification within the required timeframe, that employee may face non-renewal.

Timeframe:

Generally, a new educator to a school begins at the start of a new school year. The three year period begins at that start of that fiscal year (July 1) in which the educator was initially hired, and the time would conclude on June 30 following three full years. As an example, a new educator is hired for the 2010-2011 school year. The clock starts on July 1, 2010. The end of the three year period to obtain initial Catechist Certification would be June 30, 2013. Educators hired after the start of the school year but before Christmas break will utilize the previous July 1 date. Those hired after Christmas break will utilize a January 1 start date.

Educators are highly encouraged to begin Catechist Certification courses as soon as possible, taking into consideration all variables related to accomplishing this required task within the three year period. It is unwise to leave this important formation requirement to the very end as

circumstances may arise preventing you from finishing all required courses for certification. It is also critically important that you have a firm foundation of the Catholic faith to share with your students.

Initial Catechist Certification Courses:

There are specific Kino Catechetical Institute (“Kino”) courses required for the initial Catechist Certification and only these courses will be accepted. Classes are offered in sequential order throughout a one-year cycle and a condensed two week intensive program is held each summer with all required courses. Carefully follow the Kino schedule for all course offerings.

Course Sequence:

CAT101 Catechetical Methods and Practice

ESS101 Divine Revelation

ESS102 Foundations of Salvation History

ESS103 Life of Christ

ESS104 Christ and His Mission

ESS105 Celebration of the Christian Mystery

ESS106 Foundation of the Life in Christ

ESS107 Love Your Neighbor

ESS108 Prayer

CAT102 Catechetical Specialization

Extension to Initial Certification Deadline:

It is diocesan policy that all educators obtain Catechist Certification within the three year timeframe. If extraordinary circumstances arise, the educator must meet with his/her principal to review the situation before the deadline date. Lack of planning does not create an extraordinary situation nor does waiting until the end of the three year period and other circumstances arise. The school principal will review the situation and will consult with the Superintendent before a final decision is made regarding a possible extension of time.

Exemptions:

There may be times when an individual possesses advanced knowledge and completed collegiate coursework from an accredited Catholic college or university in theology, catechetics and/or the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In these situations, an individual should meet with his/her principal right away to review the options available for an exemption to the initial Catechist Certification. Note: anyone issued an exemption from the initial certification requirements is still required to maintain Catechist Certification by adhering to the parameters for recertification.

Ongoing Formation – Recertification:

Educators continuing to work in a Catholic school within the Diocese of Phoenix, after obtaining their initial Catechist Certification, must participate in ongoing catechetical formation. It is required that certificate holders participate in at least 24 clock hours of ongoing formation within three years of initial certification and every three years thereafter. Any hours earned above the

required 24 hours prior to the date of recertification may not be used again or rolled over to the next recertification period. Also, any hours earned prior to the official recertification date provided by Kino may not be used for future recertification. It is essential to submit your recertification prior to the expiration date.

There are various options available to educators to fulfill this requirement including Kino courses (beyond initial certification courses), local parish missions, diocesan events, online formation through Franciscan University and others, retreats, conference sessions (focused on catechetical formation), and your school's own formation program.

Kino Catechetical Institute is the reviewing entity that will evaluate all earned hours. It is best to receive preapproval from Kino on any event you consider attending to meet part of the 24 hour requirement. Refer to the Kino Catechetical Institute for specific parameters regarding recertification options.

If an employed educator in a school does not renew his/her Catechist Certification within the required timeframe, that employee may face non-renewal.

Extension to Recertification Deadline:

It is diocesan policy that all educators maintain Catechist Certification once the initial certification has been received. If extraordinary circumstances arise, the educator must meet with his/her principal to review the situation before the deadline date. Lack of planning does not create an extraordinary situation nor does waiting until the end of the three year period and other circumstances arise. The school principal will review the situation and will consult with the Superintendent before a final decision is made regarding a possible extension of time. If an extension of time is granted, the educator will have a maximum of one year from the recertification expiration date to complete all recertification requirements including an additional eight hours of formation classes on top of the original 24 hours. If an individual granted an extension does not meet the extension deadline, the principal will determine if an appeal to the superintendent for extraordinary circumstances is warranted.